From: Apostolos Koutropoulos
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/17/02 9:17am
Subject: Proposed microsoft settlement.

It has come to my attention that the U.S. government is asking the public for "advice" on the Microsoft Anti-trust case.

I am a computer science student, will be graduating next spring, and I have extensive experience with almost all computing platforms.

The problems with microsoft are numerous. What causes friction and causes this company to become monopolistic are two things in my view.
1) Closed standards and file formats.
Microsoft has products, like their Microsoft Office suite for instance, that use proprietary file formats that can only be viewed with Microsoft Office Products. That being the case, if someone e-mails me, or gives me a microsoft word document to read, I absolutelly must have miscrosoft word! Microsoft should provide free viewers for their documents so that people are not forced to buy products that they dont need. Especially Microsoft Office which costs about $500 USD.

Other companies, like Adobe, have done this. PDF for instance is a format by adobe widelly used around the globe. People who wish to author works in PDF format may buy the product from adobe. People who just wish to view the documents sent to them, or downloaded from the internet need only go to adobe's site and download a *free* viewer.

2) The second thind that makes microsoft a monopoly is the fact that "PC" buyers do not have an option as to what operating system comes with their computer. Computers come "preinstalled" with windows, and the consumer has no say in it. They *must* pay for the price of windows when they buy a new computer even if they do not want it! This seems to me like extortion!
Users should be able to pick any operating system they want to go with their computer, so computers of the intel (or intel compatible chip) kind must not come preinstalled with windows in order to give the consumer choice!
Most consumers like myself window-shop, they compare

prices, and features, and the bells-and-whistles of a
product before they buy. If they have a choice between
Windows (Which costs about $200, $300 if you choose the
professional version), linux (which costs about $70) which
comes with a lot of extras, or other operating systems that
are free, or cost less than $200 and offer more than
windows offers, people will go with what is sensible to
their wallet and their productity.

Let the consumer choose and not be highjacked by microsoft
tactics.

Thank you for your time and your consideration.

Apostolos Koutropoulos

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